

won't cause socialized medicine. So tell them that, too, if you would.

And just remember this as I leave, I love you, ladies.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. All Members are reminded to address their remarks to the Chair.

WOMEN AND HEALTH CARE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from California (Mrs. DAVIS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mrs. DAVIS of California. Mr. Speaker, I can remember when women couldn't get credit cards in their own names, when drug companies didn't run tests on women, and when women were told that secretarial school was about the only career option they had. Even as recently as a year ago, women didn't have the same fair-pay rights and protections in the workplace as men have until this Congress voted to change that.

It takes women speaking up to make unfair and discriminatory practices like those a thing of the past, which is why we must speak up for this health care bill.

I would ask opponents of this reform to think of a woman in their life—whether it's a mother, a grandmother, a sister, an aunt, a daughter, or even a friend—think about her and ask yourself, is it right that insurance companies can deny her coverage based on gender? Is it right that insurance companies charge her more because she's a woman? Should women be turned away by insurance companies for such pre-existing conditions as pregnancy, giving birth by C-section, or being the victim of domestic abuse? Should 80 percent of mothers in my State of California not be offered maternity coverage in the individual market? Should women who often rely on a spouse's insurance because they are taking care of children be more vulnerable if they are divorced or widowed?

If you don't think these things are right, then you should support this bill.

The American Medical Association that represents professional caretakers of our country, they support it because it protects the health of the caretakers in our families.

So, Mr. Speaker, once it passes, insurance company penalties for the women in our lives will be a thing of the past.

Let's pass the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Kansas (Mr. MORAN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. MORAN of Kansas addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

WOMEN AND HEALTH CARE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LEE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. LEE of California. Mr. Speaker, as we stand now on the cusp of history, we have never really been this close to assuring quality, affordable health care for all Americans. While health care reform is essential for everyone, women are in particularly dire need for major changes to our health care system. Too many women are locked out of the health care system because they face discriminatory insurance practices and cannot afford the necessary care for themselves and for their children.

In 40 States and in the District of Columbia, insurers are allowed to consider gender, mind you, when setting premium rates in the individual insurance market. This practice permits insurers to charge women more than men for the exact same coverage. Additionally, businesses with predominantly female workforces can end up paying significantly more for their coverage than for predominantly male businesses.

In the past 2 years, nearly 7 million Americans have lost their health care coverage. This is just not acceptable.

While we all know that the current health care reform bill has some flaws—unfortunately it does not have a public option, or an expansion of Medicare, or a single-payer option—it offers vitally important advances for women's health. The bill makes health care coverage more affordable and extends many health services that women need.

Without health care reform, family premiums will continue to skyrocket leaving more and more women unable to afford health care. The health care system is failing American women. We owe it to each and every woman to pass this health care bill.

When I cast my vote, I will be thinking of my mother who nearly died giving birth to me, my mother Mildred. When I cast this vote, I will be thinking of my sister, Mildred, who suffers from multiple sclerosis. I will be thinking of all of the women who are denied coverage because domestic violence is considered a preexisting condition by insurance companies. When I cast my vote, I will be thinking about so many of my friends who died prematurely because they did not have access to preventative health care.

And, Mr. Speaker, when I cast my vote, I'm going to be thinking about my granddaughters Jordan, Giselle Barbara Lee, and Simone Lee, because we, when we cast this vote, are going to ensure that my granddaughters and my grandsons live longer and healthier lives.

So if we do nothing, the health care system will continue to work better for insurance companies than it does for the American people. And that is why the President has put forward a plan that will give American families and small business owners more control

over their own health care by giving them more consumer protections and shifting power away from the insurance companies.

But if we pass health care insurance reform, we also know that families and businesses will have control of their health care, the insurance industry will be prohibited finally from continuing its worst practices like denying coverage based on preexisting conditions, and we also will cut the deficit by up to \$1 trillion over the next two decades. As the President said this past week, if not us, then who. If not now, then when. Now is the time.

I urge my colleagues to support this health care reform legislation for our women, for our families, for our children, for all Americans. This is a major first step in setting a strong foundation where finally health care becomes a basic human right for all rather than a privilege for the few, which it has been in the past. We are finally, mind you, finally catching up with the rest of the industrialized world.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from North Carolina (Ms. FOXX) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Ms. FOXX addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

WOMEN AND HEALTH CARE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas. I would like to thank our friend and colleague, Congresswoman WOOLSEY, for organizing this very important statement, historic statement. Women that come from all over America, Members of Congress who have no ax to grind, who have no representation of special interest other than the American people: we stand on this floor to answer our colleagues and those who have offered a negative perspective, all kinds of obstructions and poor commentary.

Like an email I received blaming people for their obesity and diabetes. Yes, we need to be a healthier country, but does anybody realize that insurance companies would never provide for preventative care so that we could be tested and that we could learn to eat differently, to watch our diets? That is why this country spends more time wasting dollars on those who are sick.

So I stand today to be able to say to all of the moms and nurturers who happen to be women that we have listened to your call. We have actually recognized that it is important to provide for preventative care. You know what you do.

As we were raised by our moms and grandparents and aunts and uncles, they told us wipe our nose with tissues, wash our hands way before this whole